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into the Belfast newspapers, has given rise to some angry attacks on the character of Thomas Paine, and on those who cannot stretch their creed to please the champions of orthodoxy. Nothing in my view can be more unfair.

Is a man to be hunted out of society while living, and defamed when dead, because his creed may differ essentially from commonly received opinions? The issue as to the purity of the respective tenets, cannot be fairly tried by the lives either of believers or unbelievers. Drunkenness is, alas! too common to be the opprobrium only of one class. The fear of death will probably be refused to be admitted as a test of imperfection in doctrine, when the mild, placid manner of David Hume, in his last moments, is contrasted with the perpetual dread of death exhibited by Dr. Johnson, that bull-dog of orthodoxy, who though piquing himself on his sound believing, was through his whole life in one continual dread of death, so as to make his life miserable. He was so much afraid of being left alone, and on such bad terms with himself, that his biographer relates that by every artifice he protracted the hour of separation at night, till his importunities from his dread of solitude became troublesome to his friends, and Esther Lynch Thrale paid dear for his company, by being often forced to sit up making tea for him, till past the midnight hour.

From an examination of these circumstances, and other instances of a similar nature, it may be seen how unfair it is, to reproach unbelievers as being exclusively immoral in their conduct, and peculiarly afraid of death. They who plume themselves on the soundness of their creed, would complain of the unfairness of reproaching their faith with

the errors of many of its professors. Let them give the measure to others, which they claim for themselves, and not support their cause by uncandid arguments. In these respects much unfairness has been practiced by the advocates of popular creeds, and many falsehoods are propagated in support of what these people call truth.

The fact is that there is no necessary connection between libertinism and infidelity. I am not disposed to reproach christianity with the immoral lives of many of high note in its various communities, but I assert that libertinism and infidelity have not such an inseparable union, that they cannot be held totally distinct.

Thomas Paine was a drunkard, Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon, and others, connected libertine practice and speculation with a disbelief of many opinions, which are deemed orthodox, but their practical errors did not necessarily result from their scepticism. A list of believers equally as immoral might readily be formed.

Men eminent for virtue have disbelieved many parts of the popular creed, and have manifested by their lives, that a state of disbelief in many articles of commonly received doctrines, is consistent with a strict self-denial, and a rigid self-government.

K.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ON EMIGRATION TO AMERICA.

BY accounts recently received from some persons who have lately gone from this country to settle in America; I have observed that the prospect is not so favourable as what it appeared to them on their first setting out, while they wish to discourage others from looking towards America as a country any

more likely to succeed in, than in this. Because they have not succeeded all at once, according to their wishes, they have drawn perhaps too unfavourable and hasty conclusions. Other accounts exhibit a more pleasing appearance.

However, to insure any tolerable hope of success, it is certain it requires time and no small degree of exertion, perhaps a greater share of both than what many are aware of, or are willing to bestow.

Doubtless the unhappy disagreement at present subsisting between the two countries (I wish that legislators and managers of public affairs would, by the awful appearance of the times, be instructed and learn to act more wisely,) renders it more difficult to many to procure employment than otherwise it might be, were matters on a peaceable footing, and a free commercial intercourse allowed.

Many on going to America, suffer their minds to be so buoyed up with the prospect of obtaining comfortable settlements on easier terms than they have been accustomed to here, and are much disappointed if they do not speedily meet with all they had in idea on their first arrival; being discouraged as to their own future prospects, they are ready to pronounce the country unfavourable to the views of the new adventurer. Exertion is necessary there as well as here, and without it we need not expect that any thing valuable will succeed.

On considering the state of this country, and the subject of emigration to America, I am rather a friend to the latter than otherwise. The population of this country appears to be such as to well afford a considerable drain of its inhabitants, and I think there is a stronger probability of obtaining in America, by industry and patient perseverance, a more

comfortable independence (without industry and perseverance, independence is unattainable in any country, the idle and extravagant are sure of it nowhere) than what the same degree of exertion is likely to insure here. But I fear that many embrace the measure with too sanguine hopes of success, and with the chimerical idea that they shall there enjoy, without much labour, a large share of ease and opulence. It is therefore no wonder they should be disappointed on finding matters so different from what their fond fancies had pictured.

Considering the state to which this country is reduced, and the great difficulty many find in procuring, with all the care and exertion of which they are capable, a decent competency for themselves and their families, it is not to be wondered at, if they should think of endeavouring to better their situation, by emigrating to a country which they have been always accustomed to hear extolled for freedom, and possessing advantages superior in many points of view to this.

Our inclinations naturally bend towards the place that gave us birth, what is it then in the constitution of this country and the management of its public affairs, and in the conduct of the great towards those they have in their power, that estranges the hearts of so many of its inhabitants from their native soil, and induces them to seek in a foreign land, that honest independence which a variety of causes renders it so difficult to obtain in their own? What is it in the policy of America, its laws, and form of the government that invites so many to seek an asylum within her boundaries? This appears to me to be a subject affording much room to our legislators for reflection, and investigation into the causes why the hearts of the people are so

alienated. Surely something must be essentially wanting to insure their affections, and to wean them from the desire so prevalent of leaving their native country.

The people may justly charge the legislators with many grievous and important errors sufficiently strong and numerous to sink to the lowest pitch of embarrassment, a state already bending, seemingly to its fall, through a long succession of unwise measures, in opposition to sound policy, and fatal to the welfare of the country. To support these measures, and the cruel purposes of a most destructive and iniquitous war, wherein the lives of thousands are sported with, to a degree of unfeeling barbarity, the land is burdened with enormous taxes, more than it is able to bear, and the faces of the poor are, as it were, ground to contribute in supporting a system, fraught with oppression and injustice. Yet the people themselves are justly chargeable with many glaring inconsistencies, contributing full as much to their own inconvenience, and loss of real comfort, as the errors and blunders of legislators. Both added together, exhibit no cheering prospect to the view of those who are willing carefully to examine into the nature of right and wrong, and their very different effects.

It is certain many might, if they would, better their situation without going into a foreign land, by forsaking wrong practices and evil habits, and turning to a regular line of conduct, whereby there would be a probability, notwithstanding the difficulty of the times, of procuring to themselves a virtuous independence, which it is not likely they will ever arrive at either here or elsewhere, as long as they continue in the state they are, and remain the slaves to corrupt customs.

The observations of Benjamin

Franklin, are worthy of the closest inquiry, how far they are applicable to ourselves. "The taxes," says he, "are indeed very heavy, but if those laid on by government, were the only ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them, but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us, we are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly, and from these taxes the government cannot deliver us." But it is in our own power, in a great measure, to deliver ourselves, by reforming our conduct, and renouncing many of the extravagant and slavish customs; the foolish and expensive habits to which we voluntarily submit, at the expense of an honest independence, and a conscientious discharge of our several duties, and which, were they imposed on us by the government, we would think an intolerable burden.

The times are indeed difficult, but as difficulties increase, we should endeavour to retrench some of our unnecessary expenses, and learn to confine our desires to as few wants as are consistent with what we feel of the pressure of the times. N. S.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

*A History of the Wahabites, from their origin to the close of the year 1809, by L. A*****, has lately been published at Paris. As the author, who resided at Aleppo a few years ago, appears to have had opportunities of acquiring authentic information respecting a sect, of whom but little was known, though it is difficult to say of what importance it may prove to the followers of Mohammed in general, and thus to the general face of affairs in the East, a full account of these people will probably gratify*